

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CAPE T 00467 01 OF 02 100920Z
ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6916
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 0467

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MORG, WA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: LOCAL POLICE, MILITARY AND PARA-MILITARY FORCES

REF: (A) 77 PRETORIA 5701, (B) CAPE TOWN 0264,

1. SUMMARY: THE SAG HAS GIVEN US AN INCOMPLETE AND MISLEADING RESPONSE TO THE CONTACT GROUP'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON THE HOME GUARD, POLICE, CITIZEN FORCE, COMMANDOS AND REGIONAL FORCES IN NAMIBIA. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING MEETING OF CAPE TOWN FIVE WITH FOURIE MARCH 8 (CAPE TOWN 0456), HE GAVE US THE FOLLOWING REPLY TO THE REQUEST MADE TO HIM IN NEW YORK FOR INFORMATION REGARDING THE HOME GUARD, POLICE, CITIZEN FORCE, COMMANDOS AND REGIONAL FORCES:

QUOTE: DURING THE RECENT DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING SOUTH WEST AFRICA IN NEW YORK, A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS WERE RAISED REGARDING THE SIZE OF THE FOLLOWING:

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PAGE 02 CAPE T 00467 01 OF 02 100920Z

1. HOME GUARD: THE PURPOSE OF THE HOME GUARD IS TO ASSIST THE POLICE IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTIES AND, THEREFORE, THEIR NUMBERS SHOULD BE INCLUDED UNDER POLICE.

2. BUREAU FOR STATE SECURITY: BY THE VERY NATURE OF THINGS DETAILS CANNOT BE MADE AVAILABLE, BUT WE UNDER-

STAND THAT THE NUMBER IS RELATIVELY SMALL AND IS IN ANY CASE LESS THAN TWO DOZEN.

3. REGIONAL FORCES: (KAVANGO PLUS-MINUS 200, OVAMBO PLUS-MINUS 100, CAPRIVI 25-30): APART FROM THE ABOVE, THERE ARE COLORED, NAMA, DAMARA, BASTER AND HERERO GROUPS WHO HAVE RECEIVED ONLY INITIAL TRAINING--SOME WEEKS--AND WHO CANNOT BE DESCRIBED AS TRAINED MILITARY UNITS. THEY COULD PERHAPS AT THIS STAGE BE DESCRIBED AS CIVIL DEFENSE PERSONNEL. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF THESE GROUPS IS BETWEEN 400 AND 500 WHO WILL ALSO BE AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL.

4. POLICE (INCLUDING SECURITY POLICE AND HOME GUARD): THE TOTAL ESTABLISHMENT IN RESPECT OF THE POLICE, SECURITY POLICE AND THE HOME GUARD IS IN THE REGION OF 3000. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THIS FIGURE INCLUDES SUCH CATEGORIES OF POLICE AS FINGER-PRINTS AND CRIMINAL RECORDS STAFF, PAY, STORES AND ADMINISTRATIVE CLERKS, PUBLIC PROSECUTORS AND COURT ORDERLIES, MOTOR AND RADIO TECHNICIANS, PRISON GUARDS AND GENERAL WORKERS AND FORENSIC LABS, INSTRUCTORS, COOKS, MEDICAL ORDERLIES AND MESS ORDERLIES. IN VIEW OF CURRENT EVENTS THE ESTABLISHMENT MIGHT HAVE TO BE STRENGTHENED. END QUOTE.

3. WE NOTED TO FOURIE THAT THE PAPER DID NOT COVER
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PAGE 03 CAPE T 00467 01 OF 02 100920Z

COMMANDO AND CITIZEN FORCES. HE REPLIED THESE WERE INCORPORATED IN THE OVERALL SADF FIGURES IN THE TERRITORY WHICH WERE SUBJECT TO THE REDUCTION TO 3,000. THE TERRITORIAL UNITS WOULD EITHER BE INCLUDED IN THE 3,000 RESIDUAL FORCES OR DEMOBILIZED. CLEARLY, THE SAG WANTS TO AVOID GIVING US A FIGURE ON THE SIZE OF THE COMMANDO AND CITIZEN FORCES. DAO INFORMATION ON THE CITIZEN FORCE AND COMMANDO UNITS IS BEING SENT SEPTEL. DAO SUGGESTS THAT THE SAG SHOULD BE ABLE TO PROVE ANY NUMBER THEY WISH SIMPLY BY JUGGLING THE BOOKS, DISBANDING OR DEACTIVATING UNITS. DAO REPORTS THAT IT HAS IN FACT BEEN TOLD RECENTLY THAT THERE ARE NO CITIZEN FORCE UNITS IN NAMIBIA. THERE WERE SUCH UNITS THERE BEFORE TROOP STRENGTH BECAME AN ISSUE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, BUT NOW THEY HAVE DISAPPEARED. WHILE THE SAG MAY PLAY WITH NUMBERS, IT IS APPARENT THAT THEY WILL HAVE TO TAKE FORMAL ACTION WHICH CAN BE VERIFIED SHOWING THAT THEY HAVE LIQUIDATED COMMAND STRUCTURES AND ANY INSTALLATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH CITIZEN FORCE AND COMMANDO UNITS.

4. ON THE QUESTIONS OF THE HOME GUARD AND THE REGIONAL FORCES, THERE ARE CONSIDERABLE DISCREPANCIES

BETWEEN THE STATEMENTS IN THE PAPER QUOTED ABOVE AND OTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US INCLUDING STATEMENTS FROM SAG OFFICIALS. CLEARLY, HERE AGAIN THE SAG DOES NOT WISH TO GIVE US AN ESTIMATE OF THE NUMBER OF HOME GUARD INCLUDED IN THEIR TOTAL FIGURE OF 3,000 POLICE. SINCE WE WERE TOLD LAST YEAR BY AUTHORITIES IN OVAMBO (REFTELS) THAT THERE WERE PLANS TO HAVE A TOTAL OF 700 HOME GUARD FOR OVAMBO, AND ASSUMING ROUGHLY A PROPORTIONAL NUMBER FOR THE OTHER REGIONAL TRIBAL AREAS, THE TOTAL OF SUCH FORCES COULD COME TO 1500.

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00467 02 OF 02 100930Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 0467

5. AS NOTED IN REFTELS, THE HOME GUARD IS TRAINED BY THE ARMY AND IS UNDER SADF COMMAND (WHILE THE PREDECESSOR TO THE HOME GUARD, THE TRIBAL POLICE, WERE UNDER POLICE COMMAND). THE SAG, THEREFORE, IS ON SHAKY GROUND TO ARGUE THAT THE HOME GUARD SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS PART OF THE POLICE. MOREOVER, THE HOME GUARD WEAR ARMY-TYPE UNIFORMS AND VERY LIKELY ARE IDENTIFIED IN THE MINDS OF THE LOCAL POPULACE AS BEING PART OF THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. AS REPORTED REFTELS, HOWEVER, THE HOME GUARD IS ASSIGNED SUCH DUTIES AS GUARDING LOCAL GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS AND MINISTERS, WHO PRESUMABLY WILL CONTINUE IN OFFICE DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD. THESE PRO-SAG LOCAL LEADERS WILL JUSTIFIABLY FEAR FOR THEIR LIVES IF THEIR PERSONAL GUARDS ARE REMOVED. THE QUESTION WHETHER TO REPLACE THE HOME GUARD WITH

UN PERSONNEL OR TO ALLOW IT TO CONTINUE IS AN ISSUE
THAT COULD BE LEFT TO THE ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL AND THE
UN SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE TO RESOLVE. IT WOULD,
HOWEVER, BE ADVISABLE TO PUT ON RECORD THE CONTACT
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 CAPE T 00467 02 OF 02 100930Z

GROUP'S VIEW THAT, GIVEN THE NATURE OF THE HOME GUARD,
IT IS HIGHLY QUESTIONABLE WHETHER THEY CAN LEGITIMATELY
BE INCLUDED UNDER POLICE IN TERMS OF THE WESTERN PROPOSAL.

6. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF REGIONAL (ETHNIC) FORCES CITED
IN FOURIE'S PAPER ABOVE CONFLICTS WITH THE FIGURE IN THE
SAG ADDENDUM ON REGIONAL (ETHNIC) FORCES GIVEN TO US
ON OCT. 4, 1977 (77 PRETORIA 5265). IN THAT ADDENDUM,
IT WAS STATED THAT THE NUMBER OF REGIONAL FORCES WHO
WOULD BY THE END OF DECEMBER 1977 HAVE COMPLETED THEIR
INITIAL TRAINING WOULD "IN ALL PROBABILITY NOT EXCEED
1600." THE FIGUR GIVEN IN FOURIE'S MOST RECENT PAPER
FOR THE KAVANGO AND CAPRIVI REGIONAL FORCES IS CONSISTENT
WITH THE NUMBERS PROVIDED TO US ON THE SPOT LAST YEAR.
FOURIE'S FIGURE OF 100 PERSONNEL IN THE OVAMBO BATTALION,
HOWEVER, IS ONE-THIRD THE FIGURE PROVIDED BY THE OVAMBO
BATTALION COMMANDER TO THE EMBASSY POLITICAL COUNSELOR
LAST OCTOBER. THE BATTALION COMMANDER HAD ALSO SAID
THAT ADDITIONAL INTAKES OF RECRUITS WERE SCHEDULED FOR
JANUARY AND AGAIN IN APRIL. THE DISAPPEARANCE OF
200 OF THE OVAMBO SOLDIERS FROM THE TALLY LEADS US TO
SUSPECT THAT THEY MAY HAVE BEEN SHIFTED EITHER TO A
REGULAR SADF BATTALION IN ORDER TO INCLUDE THEM IN
A POSSIBLE RESIDUAL FORCE OR THAT THEY HAVE BEEN
TRANSFERRED OVER TO THE HOME GUARD. AGAIN, WE SHOULD
PUT ON RECORD OUR AWARENESS OF THIS SUDDEN DECREASE
IN THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL IN THE OVAMBO BATTALION,
AND STATE THAT IF THEY HAVE JOINED THE HOME GUARD,
THIS WOULD FURTHER INCREASE THE PROBLEM OF ACCEPTING
THE HOME GUARD AS PART OF THE POLICE.

7. IN FOURIE'S PAPER AS WELL AS THE OCTOBER 1977
ADDENDUM, THE SAG DESCRIBED THE REGIONAL FORCES AS
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PAGE 03 CAPE T 00467 02 OF 02 100930Z

PERFORMING POLICE, PARAGAMILITARY OR CIVIL DEFENSE
FUNCTIONS. THIS IS IN STRIKING CONFLICT WITH
THE DESCRIPTION OF THE FUNCTION OF THE REGIONAL
(ETHNIC) FORCES BY GENERAL GELDENHUYS,
COMMANDER OF SOUTH WEST AFRICA COMMAND, AS WELL AS THE

COMMANDERS OF THE KAVANGO, OVAMBO AND CAPRIVI UNITS (REF A). IT WAS MADE CLEAR BY THESE OFFICERS LAST OCTOBER THAT THE REGIONAL FORCES WERE "PART AND PARCEL" OF THE SADF AND WERE TRAINED TO OPERATE AS REGULAR INFANTRY UNITS AND WERE SEEN AS THE CORE OF A FUTURE INDEPENDENT NAMIBIAN ARMY.

8. WE ASKED FOURIE FOR A BREAKDOWN OF THE POLICE FORCE FIGURE BETWEEN THOSE PERFORMING THE SERVICE FUNCTION DESCRIBED AND THOSE ENGAGED IN PATROL WORK. FOURIE SAID HE HAD NO BREAKDOWN BUT WOULD VENTURE THE PERSONAL GUESS THAT 20-25 PERCENT WERE ENGAGED IN SERVICE FUNCTIONS. IF, AS WE SUSPECT, THE 3,000 FIGURE INCLUDE AS MANY AS 1500 HOME GUARDS, THIS WOULD LEAVE US WITH AN ESTIMATE OF SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE FORCES IN THE 1500 RANGE OF WHICH ROUGHLY 1200 ARE OPERATIONAL. BOWDLER

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